



ISLAND ^{40 YEARS}
INSTITUTE

IMPACT REPORT

2023





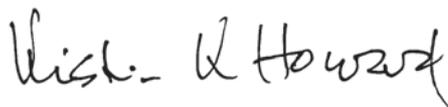
THIS PAGE: Island Institute's Community Development Officer Abby Roche meets with Vinalhaven community members to discuss sea level rise. **FRONT COVER:** Afton Vigue of the Governor's Energy Office, formerly of Maine Aquaculture Association.

A Beacon of Forward-Looking Solutions

In the wake of another remarkable year for Island Institute, I am delighted to share our achievements with you. I'm especially proud to do so in partnership with our new president, Kim Hamilton. The board unanimously welcomed Kim to Island Institute in April, and this report reflects what we all saw in Kim: a deep understanding of the trends shaping communities along the coast, a compelling vision for our shared future, and a commitment to community-informed development.

In a world of rapid change and confusing signals, Island Institute remains a beacon of common-sense, forward-looking solutions. I encourage you to learn more about our work through this report and to deepen your own appreciation for the ingenuity and resilience that abounds in Maine and reverberates well beyond our coast.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for your partnership, your belief in our mission, and for fueling our work at a crucial time for Maine's coastal communities.



Kristin Howard
Board Chair, Island Institute



Community Roots and Bold Aspirations

When I stepped into the president's role at Island Institute in April, I knew that Island Institute would be standing toe-to-toe with some of the biggest tectonic shifts shaping the coast of Maine—from global warming and changes to our fisheries to demographic forces and changes in our communities. I quickly learned that Island Institute was built for this especially challenging moment, with its deep roots in communities and bold aspirations for the future.

Community development is a long game, which is why our commitment to Maine's coastal and island communities spans decades—four decades, in fact. As you learn about our impact, I hope that you will come to the same conclusion that I have: because of Island Institute's work, future generations—no matter where they live—will look to the Gulf of Maine for inspiration because we have taken great care to steward the bounty we have been given.

Work like ours requires community courage, extraordinary foresight, and a whole lot of perseverance and listening. These are the tools of our trade, and I am so pleased to share the results of our work with you.



Kimberly A. Hamilton, Ph.D.
President, Island Institute



The Year at a Glance

AUGUSTA
Protecting the Working Waterfront—Permanently
PAGE 11



ISLESBORO
Accelerating the Adoption of Electric Workboats
PAGE 11

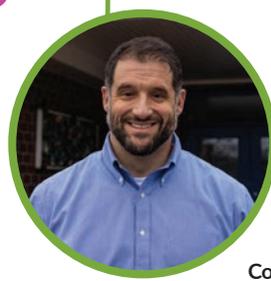


WHERE WE'VE WORKED

-  Climate and Community
-  Marine Economy
-  Sustainable Communities
-  Fellows



CHEBEAGUE
Building Community
Climate Resilience
PAGE 9



ST. GEORGE
Supporting Education,
Community, and Policy
PAGE 5



NORTH HAVEN
Improving Island
Transportation
PAGE 13



EASTPORT
Supporting Renewable Energy Solutions in Remote Communities
PAGE 9



MOUNT DESERT ISLAND
Supporting Community-Driven Climate Solutions
PAGE 5



ISLE AU HAUT
Connecting Communities to High-Speed Internet
PAGE 13

The Year in Numbers

STANDING WITH COMMUNITY

Worked with **455 partner organizations** and **1,491 community members.**

Served **173 communities** with projects, grants, and technical assistance.

Provided legislative testimony on **14 bills** in the State Legislature.

FUELING COMMUNITY IMPACT

Awarded **\$140,105 in scholarships** to **58 students** from island communities.

Generated **\$323,000 in income** for **350 island and coastal artists** through Archipelago product sales.

Provided **\$304,890** in grants to **78 small businesses** and **community organizations.**

Celebrating 25 YEARS OF FELLOWS

We have placed 148
Fellows in 29 communities
providing over 473,900
hours of support.

As the leading fellowship program in Maine, Island Institute Fellows provide critical capacity for community-based projects. Over the past 25 years, we've placed 148 fellows in 29 different coastal and island communities. We've provided over 473,900 hours of capacity to municipalities, school systems, and community organizations through our flagship program.



ST. GEORGE SCHOOL



MEET A FELLOW ALUMNUS

Mike Felton was an Island Institute Fellow from 2000-2002 and worked with the Vinalhaven school system. He stayed on the island for several years, married another fellow, raised a family, and became principal of the school. Today, he is the superintendent of the St. George Municipal School Unit, a job which he describes as **THE PERFECT INTERSECTION OF HIS THREE PASSIONS: EDUCATION, COMMUNITY, AND POLICY**. Mike recently competed for the 2023 Yass Prize, winning \$500,000 for his school to put towards the development of the nation's first Pre-K to 12th grade career and technical education program. It will include a makerspace with machinery for traditional trades like boatbuilding while integrating modern technology like 3-D printers. He currently serves on Island Institute's board.

MEET A CURRENT FELLOW

Bri Cunliffe, second-year fellow working on Mount Desert Island, supports **COMMUNITY-DRIVEN CLIMATE SOLUTION PROJECTS** for A Climate to Thrive, a local organization with a goal of achieving energy independence on Mount Desert Island. She has spent much of her fellowship engaging with the town of Tremont as they face challenges related to climate change like rising sea levels and energy insecurity. Her work includes direct communication with community members—hosting listening sessions, gathering input from her neighbors, and elevating their voices.





Since 2000, Island Institute's store and gallery, Archipelago, has showcased the work of **more than 1,500 artists** across the state. We have supported Maine's creative economy by returning **more than \$5 million** to these artists and makers.



CENTER FOR

Climate and Community

We have provided communities with over \$300,000 in sea level rise planning grants.

Building climate resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and hope

Climate change presents immense challenges to Maine communities, and we are addressing these challenges head on. “Business as usual” won’t cut it. That’s why we are taking our track record of successful climate change education, policy work, and research—along with an influx of state and federal funding for climate solutions—and working directly with communities to help build enduring climate resilience.



“*We are currently facing the most urgent humanitarian crisis in the form of climate change. We need transformational thinking, and that looks different for every community. We need visions of what Maine would look like with 100% renewables. We need to charge ahead with all the climate solutions we have—from regenerative farming to solar panels and electric boats.*”

— Dr. Ayana Johnson at Island Institute’s Climate Symposium



With Island Institute's help, Eastport acquired funding to plan a microgrid fueled by tidal power.

MATCHING RENEWABLE POWER WITH RURAL PRIORITIES

With our help, rural Maine communities are at the forefront of renewable energy investment. As a regional partner to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Island Institute supports energy system planning and projects on islands and in remote communities with unreliable and expensive energy systems. We assist communities in making effective energy resilience decisions. Through this work we have set the stage for access to clean, reliable energy for **MORE THAN 36,000 PEOPLE IN FIVE REMOTE AND RURAL COMMUNITIES.**

PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITIES TO PREPARE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Serving as a key player in the State of Maine's Community Resilience Partnership, we're helping communities become more resilient to effects of climate change. By enrolling communities in the program, facilitating community discussions, connecting local climate action teams to resources, and strategizing funding opportunities, we strengthen community response and preparedness. After working with our team over the past year, **CHEBEAGUE, MONHEGAN, LONG ISLAND, AND CRANBERRY ISLES** all received funding from the State of Maine for local climate resilience projects.

The Chebeague Climate Action team partnered with Island Institute to install a tidal gauge at the ferry dock.



CENTER FOR Marine Economy

Creating the diversified, climate-friendly marine economy of the future

Maine's coastal communities revolve around a marine-based economy. Our vision for the future of that economy includes expanding the pathways for individual and family livelihoods. Through a growing variety of species and consumer markets, new approaches will bring much-needed stability in the face of growing challenges. By supporting income and employment diversification, protecting and preserving working waterfronts, and facilitating the transition to low-carbon, climate-resilient harvests and infrastructure, we are preparing communities for changes to come.

We are leading the transition away from fossil fuels in Maine's marine sector.



“ I wasn't sure I could transition my oyster farm to solar energy, but getting a grant from Island Institute and USDA made that dream come true for me... I've also been partnering with Island Institute to work towards electric outboards for my boats, so someday the farm will be self-reliant on solar energy.”

– Krista Tripp, owner of Aphrodite Oysters in South Thomaston and Spark! grant recipient



Governor Mills signs into law a bill that creates a new tool for preserving critical waterfront access.

PROTECTING OUR WORKING WATERFRONT—PERMANENTLY

Making a living from our fishery requires shoreline access. Unless protected by law, working waterfront access is always in danger of being lost. Island Institute worked with State Representative Morgan Rielly of Westbrook to dramatically expand opportunities to protect Maine's diminishing working waterfronts. The resulting legislation allows land trusts to secure working waterfront easements, adding another pathway for preserving this critical fisheries resource. This victory adds to the Institute's track record of successful partnerships with state legislators, as our staff have provided **TESTIMONY ON OVER FIFTY BILLS IN THE PAST THREE YEARS.**

LEADING A POST-CARBON MARINE ECONOMY

This summer, we partnered with Islesboro's Pendleton Yacht Yard to launch **TAKE CHARGE**, the **STATE'S FIRST ALL-ELECTRIC WORKBOAT**. Our goal is to build awareness for this exciting new innovation while alleviating the risk and uncertainty that comes with early adoption of cutting-edge technology. Data collected through our sea trials are providing critical learning to production firms looking to perfect the efficiency, functionality and user experience of electric engines. This work is supported in part by the State of Maine and Maine Technology Institute.

Islesboro students enrolled in a sustainability and environmentalism course test drive *Take Charge*.



CENTER FOR Sustainable Communities

Fueling community-led innovation with capital, networks, and leadership

Island Institute builds the resilience of coastal and island communities by improving access to education and employment opportunities, providing key community capacity through our Island Institute Fellowship program, and supporting critical infrastructure—be it broadband, transportation, or leadership networks. Our coast is dotted with unique and isolated communities that are facing intractable challenges. By connecting these communities—and the individuals who live there—to capital, talent, and the wisdom of other communities, we help them grow stronger together.

We helped secure over \$50 million in public/private funding to bring high-speed internet to rural homes.



“*The Island Institute staff has been instrumental in keeping our fifteen year-round islands interconnected either through convening in-person meetings or electronically. Additionally, they have regularly resourced and brought in outside experts to apply their knowledge to issues pertinent to our islands’ sustainability. These staff members have been invaluable to our pursuing our mission over twenty years.*”

— Roger Berle, Founding Co-Chair of Maine Island Coalition, 2003-2023



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES TO AFFORDABLE, HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

To remain competitive and prosperous, rural communities need affordable and fast internet access. With broadband as a key programmatic initiative, Island Institute staff began working with communities on the Blue Hill peninsula in 2017. After countless hours of technical assistance, facilitation support, and \$55,000 in planning grants, our team helped leverage **OVER \$10 MILLION IN PUBLIC/PRIVATE FUNDING** for the peninsula, resulting in **15,000 HOMES GAINING ACCESS TO HIGH-SPEED INTERNET SERVICE** in May 2023.

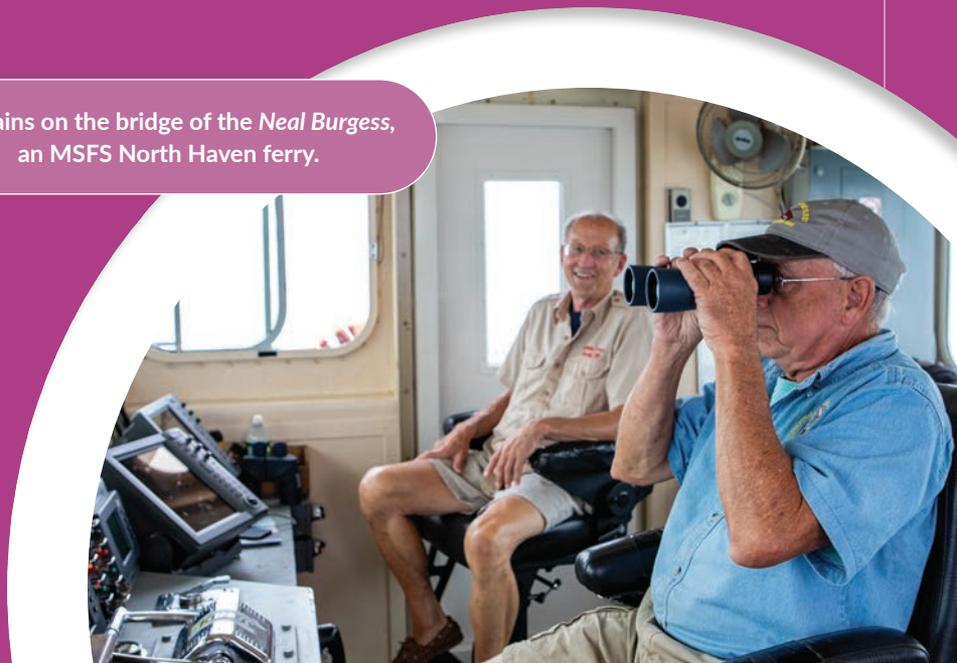


Andy Berke, from National Telecommunications and Information Administration, greets community members on Isle au Haut in celebration of their broadband award.

IMPROVING ISLAND TRANSPORTATION

We partnered with Maine State Ferry Service (MSFS) to **SURVEY MORE THAN 1,100 ISLAND RESIDENTS** and visitors to create a shared understanding of island transportation needs. By working directly with the communities most reliant on the service, we identified key challenges and recommended solutions for this critical year-round resource. The results of this work are informing how MSFS operates and which investments they make, including Maine's first electric ferry.

Captains on the bridge of the *Neal Burgess*, an MSFS North Haven ferry.



INFORMING

Critical Coastal Conversations



“A Climate of Change” video series brought the challenges of climate change to life with **more than 20,000 cumulative views.**



Our “From the Sea Up” podcast showcased stories of sustainability through **6,900 downloads.**



We celebrated 30 years of *The Working Waterfront* newspaper, publishing 120 news stories for communities along the coast in 2023.



Financials

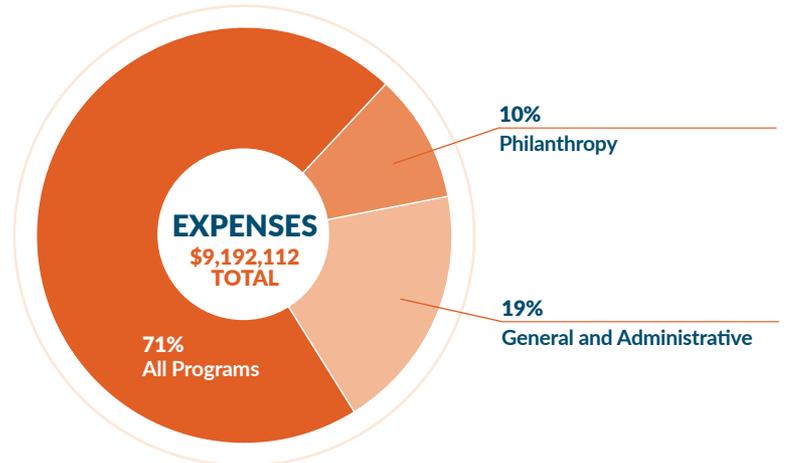
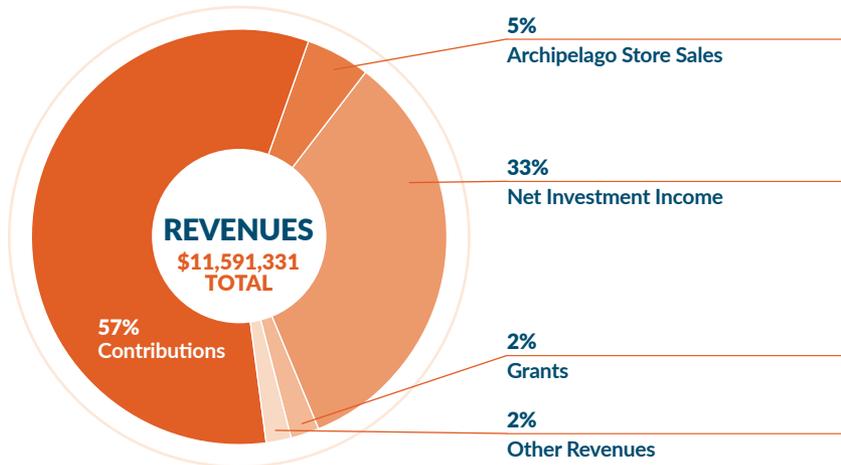
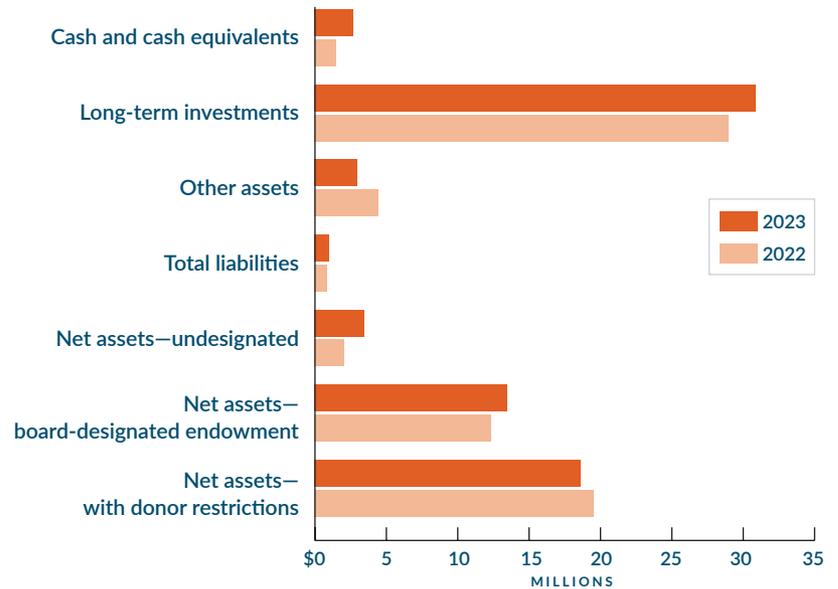
Over 80% of Island Institute’s assets are represented by long-term investments. These investments are the result of decades of careful curation and asset management, and the investment returns provide a critical, supplementary revenue stream to annual fundraising efforts. In fiscal 2023, these invested assets increased by over 10% in value which, along with other vital philanthropic revenues, funded Island Institute’s programmatic and financial support highlighted throughout this report.

All these efforts have led to an organization with a strong balance sheet including no organizational debt and important financial reserves such as board designated assets and a contingency fund. As a result, Island Institute devoted 71% of its spending toward its programmatic work in fiscal 2023 (up from 69% in fiscal 2022). This solid financial footing will enable Island Institute to weather the ups and downs of global, regional, and local financial markets and continue providing critical support in response to the issues facing Maine communities for many years to come.

For more information, please contact Pete Rand, Chief Financial Officer, at prand@islandinstitute.org or by phone at (207) 209-4857.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

JUNE 30, 2023 AND 2022



The Impact of Philanthropy

Island Institute members and donors are the lifeblood of this organization. Every philanthropic dollar provides essential resources for our work in community. We simply would not exist without your support. Members, corporate donors, and grantmakers contribute more than dollars; you help define the sense of shared purpose that shapes our strategic goals in climate action, marine economy, and community.

With your support and thousands of others who love the coast of Maine, our mission-driven staff and community partners are making a difference. With your continued support, Island Institute will focus our work where climate and economic challenges converge in communities who depend on a healthy, thriving Gulf of Maine.

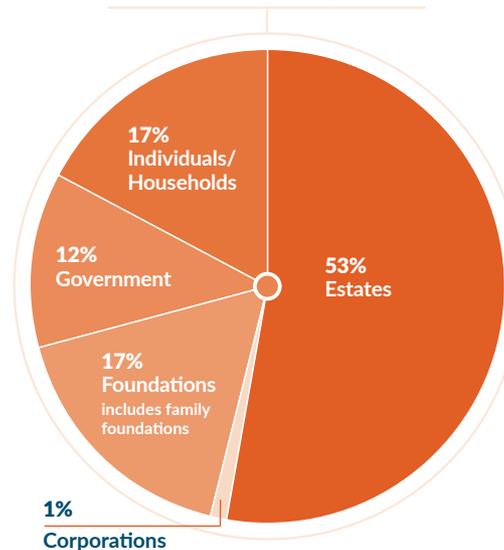
QUESTIONS?

membership@islandinstitute.org

(207) 747-1180

SOURCES OF FUNDS

Sum of Gifts as Percentage of Total



Island Institute Board of Trustees

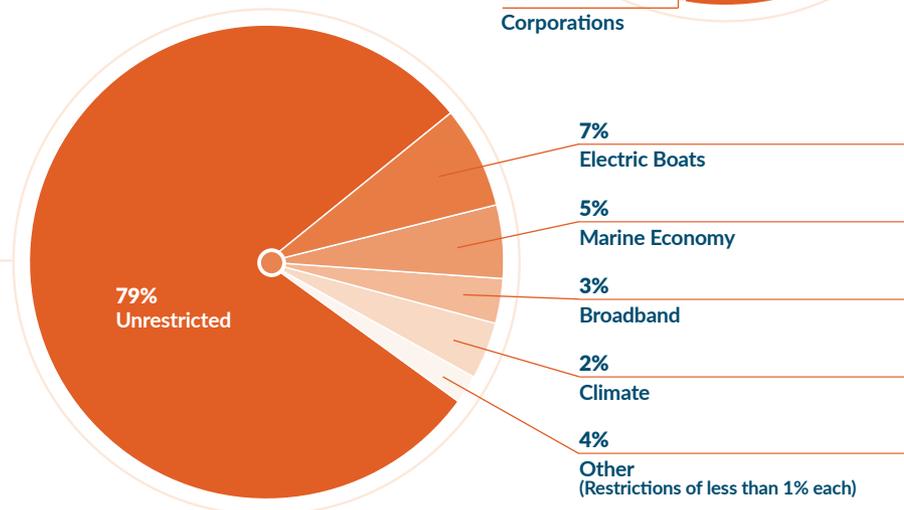
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ISLAND **40 YEARS**
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